

# Irony Thy Name is Woman

March 30, 2006

"Irony, thy name is Woman"

Dear Neighbors:

A couple of months ago, I answered the phone to talk with a woman who claimed that "Mrs. Blackledge had volunteered" to help with their campaign. "No way!" I yelled, and added a few more comments before I saw Helen waving me down. "Yes, that's just my husband," she explained to the lady.

I was confused and flabbergasted (not unusual). We had a pact - *never respond to telephone solicitations!* In fact, we repeated that mantra to all that called. But somehow, Helen had wanted to be the Stalgren Court volunteer for the Cancer Research program this year.

As most of you know, my beloved, generous, funny, clever wife Helen died on Sunday, 5 March 2006. You may not know that she died of hepatocellular carcinoma - primary cancer of the liver.

I was shocked to hear the Doctor use the C-word - it was just February 27th when we first heard that, and they planned to confirm that diagnosis with a biopsy. Why had earlier blood tests or doctor visits not triggered this information?

Well, that's another story. Perhaps this Cancer Research Institute can help, perhaps not. If you wish to contribute, I plan to send in whatever I receive by Tax Day - April 15th. Please don't feel obligated to send me anything - y'all have done more than enough already. However, I'm sure you understand if I fulfill Helen's one-time violation of our anti-solicitor pact.

Your neighbor,

- Mike Blackledge